

## NEVADA COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

The Nevada County Transportation Commission (NCTC) is the Regional Transportation Planning Agency for Nevada County. NCTC coordinates state and federal transportation programs for Nevada County, the City of Grass Valley, Nevada City, and the Town of Truckee.

### NCTC COMMISSIONERS

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Mayor of Nevada City

**Ann Guerra**  
Member-at-Large

**Chet Krage**  
Member-at-Large

**Elizabeth Martin**  
Nevada County District 4 Supervisor

**Linda Stevens**  
Mayor of Grass Valley

**Josh Susman, Vice-Chairman**  
Truckee Town Councilman

**Peter Van Zant, Chairman**  
Nevada County District 1 Supervisor

## Nevada County Transportation Commission Newsletter

Nevada County Transportation Commission  
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### This Newsletter is Prepared by the Staff of the Nevada County Transportation Commission

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The Nevada County Transportation Commission Newsletter is published bimonthly. If you would like to be added to the mailing list, please write or call the Nevada County Transportation Commission office.

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# NEVADA COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION NEWSLETTER

Issue 9

February 2002



### OUR MISSION STATEMENT COMES TO LIFE

On February 21, 2001 the Nevada County Transportation Commission (NCTC) adopted a mission statement to guide our planning efforts. It reads as follows:

*The mission of the Nevada County Transportation Commission is to plan, communicate, and coordinate with the citizens and decision makers of Grass Valley, Nevada City, Nevada County, and the Town of Truckee, and with Caltrans to identify transportation needs, propose solutions, and assist in implementing projects to create a balanced regional transportation system, while protecting the rural qualities and historic character of Nevada County.*

In addition to the mission statement, NCTC established a set of activities to achieve the mission. This first year of implementation has seen many accomplishments under each category of activity. We would like to take one category at a time and highlight some of NCTC's activities.

♦ *NCTC develops a Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) which includes the actions, funding recommendations, and policy direction necessary to meet the needs of each transportation system component in the region.*

On December 19, 2001 NCTC adopted an update of the RTP to bring it into compliance with the California Transportation Commission's revised Regional Transportation Plan Guidelines. The document included 79 short-term and long-term improvements within the county at a total estimated cost of \$240.3 million.

♦ *NCTC interacts with the community through workshops, news media, the Internet, and its bimonthly newsletter.*

The Social Services Transportation Advisory Council and NCTC staff held meetings and workshops regarding Unmet Transit Needs in Grass Valley and Truckee. Data was collected at the Unmet Needs Hearing as the community gave comments on unmet transit needs in their area.

A workshop was held by the South Nevada County Concerned Citizens regarding SR 49 alternatives. NCTC's Executive Director Daniel Landon and Linda Aeschliman, Senior Transportation Planner for the Placer County Transportation Planning Agency (PCTPA), were present to field questions on proposed bypass alternative routes to I-80 around the Auburn business corridor. Transportation Commission Chairman Chet Krage and Supervisor Sue Horne were also in attendance. As a result of citizen comments, NCTC passed Resolution 02-03 directing staff to continue working with PCTPA and Caltrans to plan for an alternate route to I-80.

In August 2001 Executive Director Landon appeared on local cable television to provide an overview of the Transportation Commission's role in our county. He outlined future projects and explained how concerned citizens could be more involved in the transportation planning process.

Five issues of our newsletter were published during 2001 to provide information regarding current and future regional transportation plans and projects.

### Inside this Issue:

Page	
1	NCTC Mission Statement
1	South County Update
2	Mission Statement Cont.
3	Proposition 42
3	New NCTC Chairman

### Upcoming NCTC Meeting

The next meeting of the Nevada County Transportation Commission (NCTC) will be held **Wednesday, February 20, 2002 at 8:30 a.m.**, in the Grass Valley City Council Chambers, 125 East Main Street, Grass Valley, California.



**Traffic Congestion at SR 49  
and Combie Road**

### SOUTH COUNTY TRAFFIC IMPROVEMENT UPDATE

At a recent Commission meeting Doug Hobbs, Caltrans District 3 Project Manager, reported that widening of SR 49 will begin around July or August of this year. Caltrans anticipate paving work to be done at night during the summer months.

Plans include an extended right turn lane from SR 49 northbound onto Combie Road and two northbound lanes at the intersection. Improvement of the Combie Road intersection is to be completed in 2002 and should provide significant improvement in traffic flow.

Widening of the Bear River Bridge on SR 49 just south of Combie Road will also begin this summer. Two lanes of the bridge will be open for traffic and two lanes will be under construction. Building and paving at the bridge will carry into 2003.



MISSION STATEMENT ACTIVITIES - Continued

- ◆ *NCTC develops and adopts a Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) that is consistent with the RTP.*  
In November 2001 NCTC adopted an RTIP for submission to the California Transportation Commission (CTC). The total cost of projects is \$57.2 million and represents the largest amount ever requested for Nevada County.
- ◆ *NCTC conducts a comprehensive planning process in the development of its annual Overall Work Program so that funds expended on planning projects will implement the goals of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).*  
The Nevada County Regional Transportation Plan has four goals. 1) Provide for the safe and efficient movement of all people, goods, services, and information. 2) Reduce adverse impacts on the natural, social, cultural, historical environment, and the quality of life. 3) Develop an economically feasible transportation system. 4) Create and maintain a comprehensive multi-modal transportation system to serve the needs of the county.  
During 2001 NCTC conducted the following planning projects which assist in the achievement of the RTP goals: The corridor study of Brunswick Road from Sutton Way to SR 174; a circulation study related to development in the south Grass Valley area; analysis of bypass alternatives for SR 49 around the Auburn area; project development work on the Dorsey Drive interchange; widening of the SR 89 “mousehole”; and widening of SR 49 from Placer County to Grass Valley.
- ◆ *NCTC reviews transportation plans and programs of member agencies and endorses them based on consistency with the RTP and RTIP. In keeping with this responsibility, the NCTC strives to be creative in assisting the region in developing the revenues to construct improvement projects.*  
The Regional Transportation Mitigation Fee was created in western Nevada County to generate revenues to fund future transportation improvements. The program includes fourteen projects with an estimated cost of \$10.2 million. Since June 2001 more than \$81,000 has been generated by the program.  
NCTC worked with the cities to review development proposals such as Kenny Ranch and Olympia Plaza II.  
NCTC helped Nevada County Transit Services with project funding submissions to the Rural Transit System Grant Program.
- ◆ *NCTC communicates and participates in workshops with Caltrans on proposed projects to be developed in the County of Nevada to ensure that the policies and goals of the RTP are implemented.*  
We have experienced enhanced communication with Caltrans this past year. At our monthly Commission meetings the Caltrans representatives present updates on projects in our county. Tom O’Donnell, a retired Caltrans Landscape Architect is volunteering his time to develop a landscape plan for the Brunswick Road interchange. Commissioners and representatives from Nevada County are working with Caltrans to develop a “gateway” to Nevada County on SR 49 in south county.
- ◆ *NCTC coordinates with regional transportation planning agencies on legislation and statewide policy issues to ensure the region receives appropriate attention and funding from the State of California and the Federal government.*  
During 2001 NCTC monitored nineteen bills being considered in the State Legislature that would impact transportation issues. One of the bills, ACA 4, will be on the March ballot as Proposition 42 (see legislative update on page 3 for further details).  
NCTC Executive Director Dan Landon is a member of the Rural Counties Task Force. This group meets every other month in Sacramento to discuss the implications of state transportation and funding policies on rural counties. The efforts of the task force have resulted in changes in state law and increased flexibility in the ways rural counties can use state transportation funds.
- ◆ *NCTC participates in interregional planning projects to ensure Nevada County projects support both regional and statewide transportation goals.*  
NCTC and PCTPA (Placer County Transportation Planning Agency) organized a joint sub-committee to meet and discuss joint transportation ventures. The SR 49 Alternatives Analysis Corridor Study was one of those joint efforts. These two agencies are also discussing with the Town of Truckee and the Union Pacific Railroad short and long-term solutions to a potentially hazardous area of Highway 89 where the railroad undercrossing (known as the “mousehole”) is too narrow for safe passage of automobiles and pedestrians. In December NCTC sent a letter of support for PCTPA’s two grant application proposals to conduct a transit marketing study in the Tahoe area and improve transit access to jobs in Tahoe and Reno.  
The Tahoe Gateway Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Project involves Caltrans and the counties of Sierra, Nevada, Placer, and El Dorado. The study is to evaluate how the latest transportation technologies might improve existing transportation conditions.
- ◆ *NCTC administers Transportation Development Act funds to ensure all statutory requirements are met, including the identification of the region’s transit needs.*  
Financial and performance audits were conducted by independent auditors to evaluate NCTC’s level of performance. We scored high marks for efficiency and effectiveness. The 2000 performance audit states, “NCTC has a well-defined Mission Statement and clearly reflects Overall Work Program plans and objectives. Its achievements in meeting these expected results are excellent.”  
The region’s transit needs are evaluated yearly through the Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (see details on page 1).



Telecare Van



Local Bus



RR Museum



Bike Trail

- ◆ *NCTC manages Regional Surface Transportation Program funds and Regional Improvement Program funds in accordance with Federal acts and statutes promulgated by the State of California, selecting and funding eligible transportation improvement projects based upon those that are most effective and beneficial to the region.*

NCTC funded road improvements for the Nevada County Narrow Gauge Railroad Museum with an allocation of \$57,000 and allocated \$100,000 to the Donner Pass Road Bicycle Lane project in Truckee. At the start of 2002 the RSTP fund has a balance of more than \$1.1 million for future transportation projects.

As noted above, the NCTC submitted a request for \$57.2 million for future projects from the Regional Improvement Program. During 2001 NCTC utilized RIP funding to work with Caltrans on preparations to widen SR 49 from Placer County to Higgins Corner, preliminary project development for widening SR 49 from Higgins Corner to Grass Valley, and project development for construction of the Dorsey Drive interchange.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE – WHAT IS PROPOSITION 42?

Proposition 42 started out as ACA 4, a State Assembly Bill authored by Assembly Transportation Chair John Dutra. It will permanently dedicate the sales tax on gasoline – tax we already pay at the pump -- to transportation purposes. Tax revenues from gasoline currently deposited in the General Fund will be transferred to the Transportation Investment Fund (TIF). For fiscal years 2003-04 through 2007-08, money in the Transportation Investment Fund will be allocated by the Legislature. For year 2008-09 and thereafter money would be allocated by the following formula: 20% for public transit and mass transportation projects; 40% for transportation capital improvement projects through the State Transportation Improvement Program or STIP; 20% for city street and highway maintenance, rehabilitation and reconstruction or storm damage repair conducted by cities; and 20% for county street and highway maintenance, rehabilitation and reconstruction or storm damage repair conducted by counties. This measure could be suspended or the money allocation formulas could be changed by a two-thirds vote of both houses of the Legislature. An annual audit of Prop. 42 funds will be required to help guarantee transportation projects get delivered on time and on budget.

California’s highways are now the third most deteriorated roadways in the nation. More than 6,000 California bridges and overpasses are structurally deficient or no longer meet highway safety or design standards. Prop. 42 will provide funds to help fix potholes and repair dangerous roads, highways, bridges, intersections and school routes.



How much money are we talking about? Gasoline sales tax revenues were estimated at \$1.3 billion in 2001-02. Future year revenues are expected to vary from \$1.2 to \$1.5 billion depending on the price of gas. Based on a \$1.5 billion deposit in the Transportation Investment Fund in 2008-09, escalated by 2% per year for the following twenty-year period, the gross total of all projected Proposition 42 revenues for this twenty-year period amounts to \$36 billion. These estimates come out to \$14.4 billion for the STIP, \$7.2 billion for cities, \$7.2 billion for counties, and \$7.2 billion for the PTA (Public Transportation Account). Locally that would add an extra \$2 million per year to the current STIP amount of approximately \$3.4 million that is Nevada County’s share. In addition, Nevada County’s maintenance dollars would increase on an average of \$1.8 million per year. City maintenance dollars would increase as follows: Grass Valley’s average increase per year would be approximately \$139,000; Nevada City’s average increase per year would be approximately \$38,000; and the Town of Truckee’s average increase per year would be approximately \$179,000. These monies would not take care of all the county and city maintenance needs but they are certainly a significant increase in existing maintenance revenues.

The endorsement list for Prop. 42 includes the Director of CA State Office of Emergency Services, CA Assoc. of Highway Patrolmen, CA Fire Chiefs Assoc., CA Taxpayers’ Assoc., CA Assoc. of School Transportation Officials, CA State Assoc. of Counties, League of California Cities, and CA Chamber of Commerce. Locally Prop. 42 has been endorsed by the Nevada County Transportation Commission, the City of Grass Valley, the Town of Truckee, and the Nevada County Contractor’s Association. Prop. 42 is also supported by a coalition of fire, police and public safety officials, highway safety officials, taxpayer organizations, auto clubs, business groups, labor unions, cities and counties, motorists, and transit riders.

Opposition to Prop. 42 has been voiced by the CA Tax Reform Assoc., CA State Firefighters’ Assoc., and Latino Issues Forum. They argue, as California’s revenues shrink, this is the wrong time to lock the Constitution into new restrictions. CA Teachers Assoc., Congress of CA Seniors Education and Resource Foundation, and Health Access of CA also oppose Prop. 42, with the stand that spending priorities should not be locked into the Constitution.

We encourage voters to educate themselves on this issue. One source of information is the Secretary of State website: [www.ss.ca.gov/elections/elections\\_viguide.htm](http://www.ss.ca.gov/elections/elections_viguide.htm).

NEW CHAIRMAN / VICE-CHAIRMAN AND COMMISSIONER FOR NCTC



Chairman Van Zant



Vice-Chairman Susman



Commissioner Martin

The position of Chairman for the Nevada County Transportation Commission is a one-year assignment that comes up for a vote each January. The Chairman’s duties include presiding at the Commission’s meetings held the third Wednesday of each month. During the month the Chairman will review the proposed agenda for the next month’s meeting with the Executive Director and discuss pertinent issues with NCTC’s staff and other commissioners as needed. NCTC’s election of officers took place on January 16th and Nevada County District One Supervisor Peter Van Zant was voted in as Chairman. Josh Susman, Truckee’s Town Council member, was elected as Vice-Chairman of the Commission. Congratulations Peter and Josh. The NCTC staff looks forward to working with you both on upcoming transportation needs in Nevada County. Thank you to Chet Krage, last year’s chairman, who did an excellent job representing the Commission.

The Commission consists of seven members. The County Board of Supervisors appoints two of its members (Peter Van Zant and Elizabeth Martin for 2002) and two county-at-large representatives (Ann Guerra and Chet Krage). Each incorporated municipality appoints one member to sit on the Commission: Linda Stevens represents Grass Valley, Kerry Arnett represents Nevada City, and Josh Susman represents Truckee.

Elizabeth “Izzy” Martin is our newly appointed Commissioner for 2002. She replaces Bruce Conklin who now serves as the county alternate. Ms. Martin represents District Four on the Nevada County Board of Supervisors. She owns and operates Indian Springs Organic Farm and has fifteen years of experience working in rural communities to promote economic and environmental justice.